

The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University

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Creators: Dumble, Wilson R.

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The Engineer's Bookshelf . . .

By WILSON R. DUMBLE

THE book reviews appearing in The Book Shelf this issue were written by members of Mr. Robert Price's English 419 class, Winter Quarter. The Shelf's janitor is happy to have this assistance, and he hopes that he can run more reviews from English 419 in the near future.

THE COMMANDOS

By ELLIOT ARNOLD

Reviewed by ROBERT C. STEWART

The Commandos is a love story of today's war. Its love scenes are of violent attack, torture, deception, suffering, and incredible heroism. Its descriptions arouse your every emotion—it detonates your hate of the Nazis, it stirs your admiration of its characters, its love scenes shake you realistically, and its story magnetizes your attention and holds you until you can't turn the pages fast enough!

The book's authentic story background is that of the Commandos—men taught to kill, to hate, adept in the use of all the lethal weapons of destruction. The Commandos are men trained to the direct onslaught and speed of a boxer, to the endurance of the cross-country runner, to the silence and deception of the jungle fighter. They are all men picked for hate: free French, escaped Norwegians, Poles whose families were murdered or frozen to death, men from the Balkans whose families were starved.

The story's leading characters are Lt. Alan Lowell, of the Commandos, and Fru Nicole Larsen, a Norwegian patriot. Lt. Lowell, an American veteran of many raids, fought in the Spanish Revolution until its end and then volunteered into the British Army, and was subsequently assigned to the Commandos. Nicole, widow of a wealthy pro-Nazi Norwegian manufacturer, has thrown her home, with its stores of whiskey and other drinks, open for the Nazis, including the commandant of the garrison, Capt. Paul Dichter.

Dichter, a typical arrogant, swaggering, and Hitler-worshipping Nazi, is deeply in love with the beautiful and most desirable Nicole. And she, to all evidences, shares this affection. Fru Larsen, the head of the underground in Norway, uses Dichter to obtain much valuable information. Her obviously pro-Nazi actions toward the Germans keep her above suspicion.

During a large scale raid on Stavanger, Norway, Lowell is wounded in the thigh. He hides during the remainder of the night and suffers terribly from his wound. He dreams of Nicole, whom he met at a party, and of how they spent

the night of their second date in his apartment in Corso, Hungary. He dreams of how terribly in love they were at that time and still were. The next evening he is captured and put in a hospital to recover before questioning. He refuses to talk and is thrown into prison and tortured.

Nicole, hearing of his imprisonment, arranges his escape to hiding in her basement. Here, while his again infected leg heals, he and "Nick" once more find the happiness they knew before in Hungary. Lowell learns of the activities of the underground, and observes how the Norwegians are carrying on their subversive activities.

Finally, they decide that he is well enough to undertake his original mission of killing Dichter, and that they should part immediately thereafter, so as to carry on their important work as before. They pledge their love for each other during their last night together. This particularly touching scene helps to draw a distinct picture of the characters of Nicole and Lowell. Their actions and little casual, everyday phrases make them seem very real to the reader.

When Dichter comes to visit Nicole that night Lowell kills him and leaves via the underground and submarine for Scotland.

Nicole, although her character may not have been most admirable, is certainly the outstanding individual in the story. She is the type of woman that this war will need many of before its end. She is a representative of the spirit of occupied Norway as was Joan of Arc to France.

The author's descriptions are extremely realistic. He feels the emotions of his characters and writes of them with all the sincerity, frankness, and forcefulness at his disposal. His style is reminiscent of the powerful Steinbeck.

His purpose was to write of the conflict in the love of two characters made strong by the demands of war. He did this job superbly by weaving it into the background of loyal Norway and the authentic commando raids on its coast.

People will remember this book. It is the Norway we like to remember, it concerns people we can't forget.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

By EDWARD R. HEWITT

Reviewed by E. J. WEISS

Almost anyone would enjoy this autobiography of Edward Hewitt, the grandson of the famous Peter Cooper, an autobiography unique in that it

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THE BOOKSHELF

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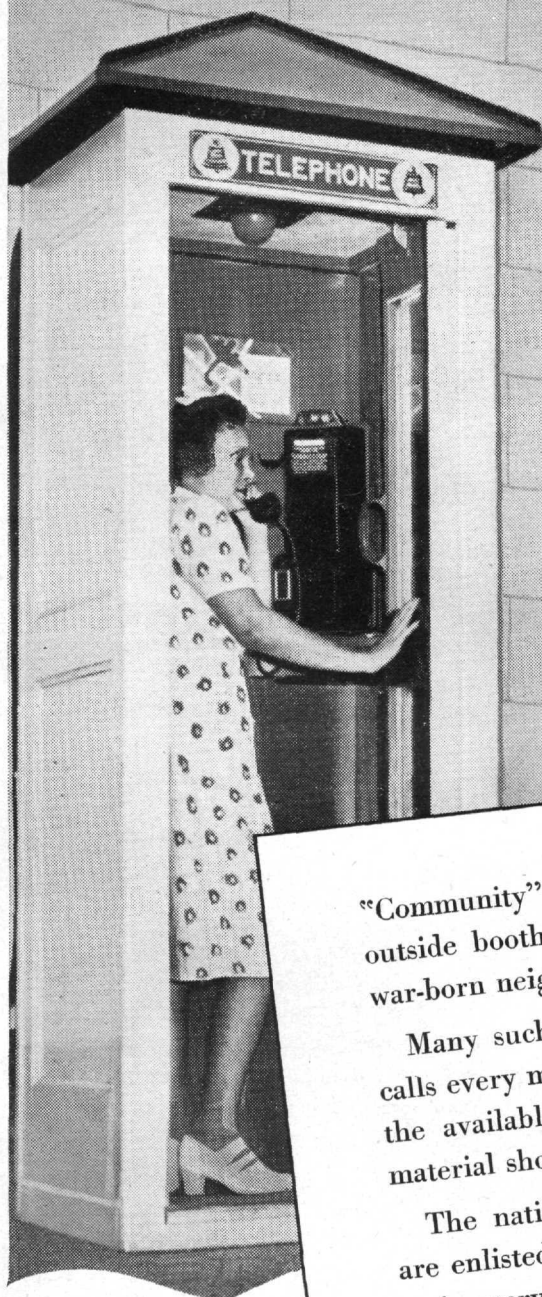
describes with vigor and humor the lives and the members of the Cooper and Hewitt families and their interesting friends, but gives only a little information about the author himself.

Those Were the Days, being an outgrowth of the stories that Edward Hewitt used to tell to his grandchildren, is full of warmth and human understanding. There are accounts of failures, achievements, frauds, all manner of adventures. The book takes the reader through the ninety-two exciting years of Peter Cooper's life, the eighty of Abram Hewitt, and the seventy-seven of Edward Hewitt, Abram's son and Peter Cooper's grandson, showing an America that is no more—an America in which productivity was unchecked, wealth was the prize of ingenuity, and the result of wealth was the common good.

All of the Coopers and Hewitts were inventors. Each one had a pet invention upon which he worked unceasingly even after it was seen to be a failure. They produced many successful inventions for which they received patents signed by the chief executive's hand. Most of their friends were inventors, too. They knew such men as Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas A. Edison, and copied their inventions for their own amusement and edification.

(Continued on page 25)

WAR TOWN BOON!



"Community" public telephones—some even in outside booth locations—are serving residents in war-born neighborhoods.

Many such telephones handle several hundred calls every month. It's a way more persons can use the available facilities, limited now by wartime material shortages.

The nation-wide resources of the Bell System are enlisted in maintaining dependable communication services—vital in war, essential in peace.



BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM



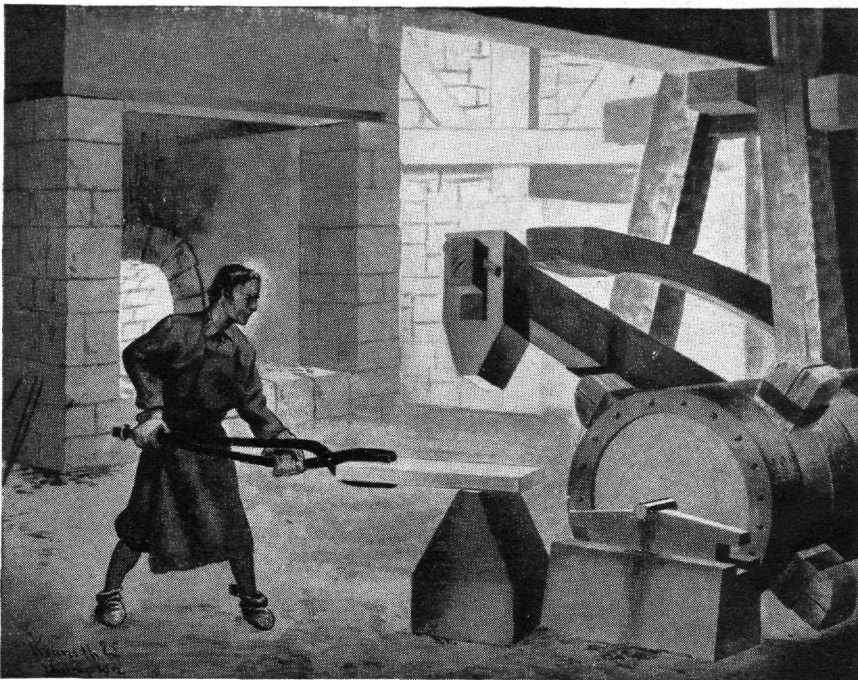
War calls keep Long Distance lines busy . . . That's why your call may be delayed.

THE BOOKSHELF

(Continued from page 20)

Old Peter Cooper staunchly backed the Atlantic cable even after the discouraging first break. Even Edward Hewitt's mother, Peter Cooper's daughter, calmly invested fifty thousand dollars in a scheme for mining sulphur and was well repaid when it turned out successfully.

(Continued on page 32)



THE BOOKSHELF

(Continued from page 25)

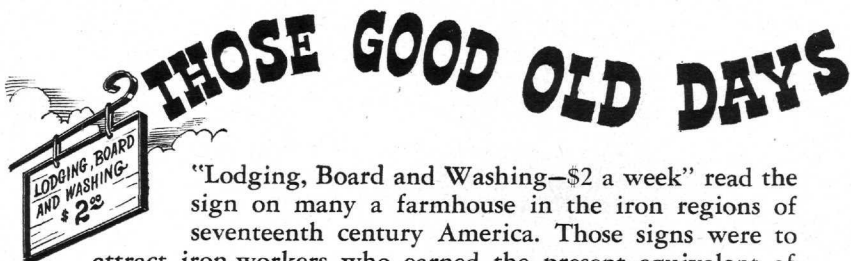
Edward Hewitt has little use for large research laboratories staffed with groups of scientists. He prefers one-man laboratories working on independent research. He is a believer in the "lone wolf" kind of scientific endeavor. There seems also to be a need for a special brand of courage and faith, considering the large numbers of scientific failures noted in the book, as well as the successes.

In 1929 Hewitt lost his fortune, but he nevertheless feels that his life has been interesting and exceptionally happy. At the end of the book he says, "I should be just as happy as I have ever been, if it were not for the fact that Mrs. Hewitt has become an invalid. . . . If only I could get my wife well again, life would be even more enjoyable."

Those Were the Days has a lucid, attractive style of writing. The reader is easily absorbed in the book because he is taken into the Cooper and Hewitt families so quickly that he feels himself one of them.

The chief weaknesses of the book are the facts that, not once in the three hundred and sixteen pages is there evidence of a connecting thread to guide the narrative, and the discursive anecdotes include old, doubtful ones as well as lively stories which throw a mellow light upon the strange mores, morals, and people of the administration of General Grant.

This book seems valuable not only because it contains fascinating stories about a stirring age, but also because it gives the reader a real glimpse of a past era through the eyes of one who lived them.

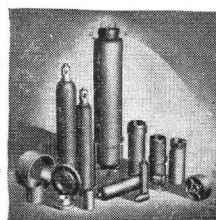


"Lodging, Board and Washing—\$2 a week" read the sign on many a farmhouse in the iron regions of seventeenth century America. Those signs were to attract iron-workers who earned the present equivalent of 85 cents a day, operating hundred pound forge hammers slowly raised and dropped by undershot water wheels. While 40 cents would buy a work cap, it took \$40 for a featherbed, \$3 for a shirt, the same for shoes and \$1 for a pair of work gloves.

It's a far cry, in time and progress, from those days and wages to the modern steelmaker's average pay. Equal advancements in steel methods, equipment and working conditions are evident in the great, modern plants of The Harrisburg Steel Corporation, where 4000 proud American steelmakers are exceeding normal capacity in their all-out war effort. At top speed, these steelmen are operating such equipment as the steam driven hammers which, in contrast to the old water wheelers, make those good old days seem even more than two centuries away.

Such men, with such spirit and equipment, have made "Harrisburg" the world's largest producer of seamless plate-made high pressure gas cylinders, and recognized specialists in the production of alloy and carbon steels, seamless steel pipe couplings, pump liners, liquefiers, hollow and drop forgings, pipe flanges, coils, bends and aerial bombs. In every "Harrisburg" product are over ninety years of know-how in fine steelmaking.

HARRISBURG
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Over 90 Years of Know-How in Fine Steelmaking

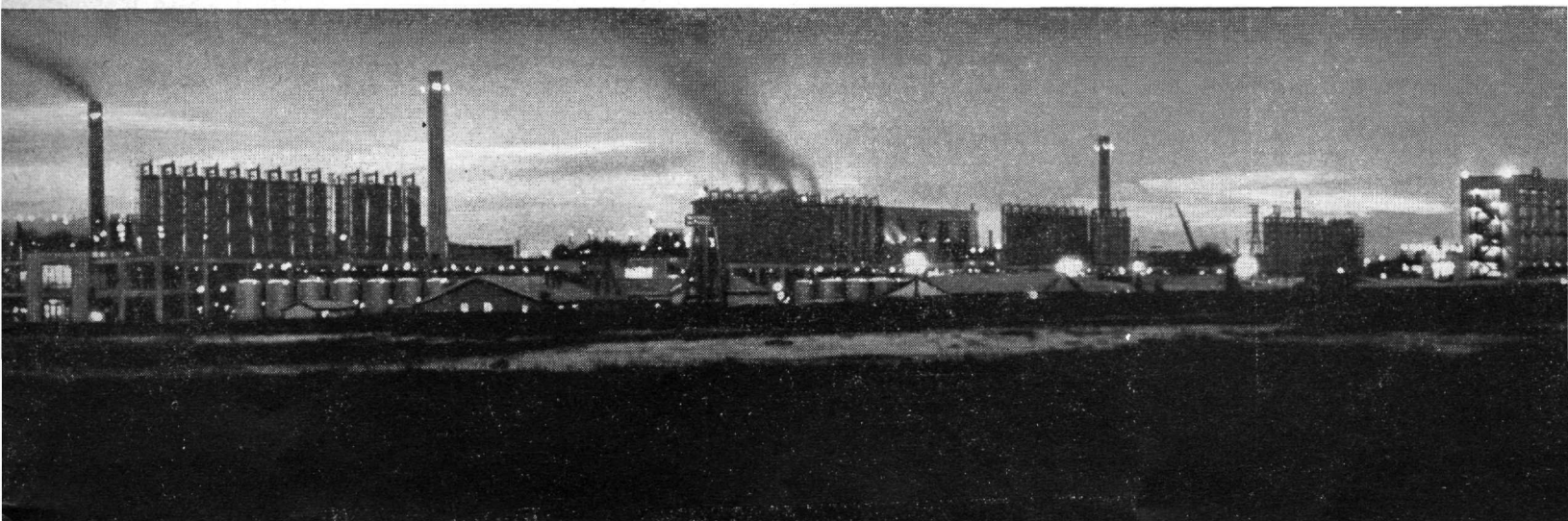
UNION CARBIDE REPORTS

first full-year's production of

BUTADIENE

for the Government's Synthetic Rubber Program

(INSTITUTE, W. VA. PLANT)



Night view of the immense butadiene plant at Institute, W. Va.

A LITTLE OVER A YEAR AGO* the first tank car of butadiene was shipped from the Government's large integrated rubber project at Institute, W. Va. This historic shipment came from the immense butadiene plant which was designed and built by CARBIDE AND CARBON CHEMICALS CORPORATION for the Government's Defense Plant Corporation—and is being operated by this Unit of UCC, for the Rubber Reserve Company.

FIRST YEAR'S PRODUCTION OVER THE RATED CAPACITY— that is the record of this huge 80,000-ton-per-year plant during its first twelve months! This has been accomplished in spite of the many inherent problems that had to be solved in starting a wholly new project of this magnitude.

Over 8/10 of a short ton of butadiene is required to make about one long ton of Buna S type synthetic rubber. Butadiene from this plant during the past year has provided more than 90,000 long tons of synthetic rubber for the Nation's requirements, both military and essential civilian. The delivery of this all-important ingredient also has made possible early production of synthetic rubber under the Government's program.

*The first tank carload of butadiene from Institute was shipped on February 18, 1943—less than one month after Unit No. 1 of the four large butadiene-producing units had started operating. Subsequently, Unit No. 2 started producing in March, Unit No. 3 in April, and Unit No. 4 on May 25, 1943.

NOW HUGE BUTADIENE PRODUCER—although originally designed to produce 80,000 tons annual capacity, the Institute plant is now delivering butadiene at a rate of more than 100,000 tons per year. An identical plant using Carbide's process was put into operation by the Koppers United Company in September, 1943, at Kobuta, near Pittsburgh, Pa.

OVER 75% OF THE TOTAL PRODUCTION OF BUTADIENE for the Government's synthetic rubber program in 1943 came from the alcohol process developed by CARBIDE AND CARBON CHEMICALS CORPORATION.

In addition to the plant at Institute, Carbide made available plans for the large plant at Kobuta, which was built and is being operated for the Government by Koppers United Company.

CARBIDE AND CARBON CHEMICALS CORPORATION also has designed and built for the Defense Plant Corporation, and is operating for the Rubber Reserve Company, another large butadiene plant at Louisville, Ky.

▼
Business men, technicians, teachers, and others are invited to send for the book P-4 "Butadiene and Styrene for Buna S Synthetic Rubber from Grain Alcohol," which explains what these plants do, and what their place is in the Government's rubber program.

BUY WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

UNION CARBIDE AND CARBON CORPORATION

30 East 42nd Street  New York 17, N. Y.

Principal Units in the United States and their Products

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Haynes Stellite Company
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National Carbon Company, Inc.

INDUSTRIAL GASES AND CARBIDE

The Linde Air Products Company
The Oxweld Railroad Service Company
The Prest-O-Lite Company, Inc.

PLASTICS

Bakelite Corporation
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